



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

For Release: **IMMEDIATE**
Date: September 10, 2003

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NCDOT WINS NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today announced that the N.C. Department of Transportation won a national award for environmental stewardship.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the organization of the nation's 50 state DOTs, presented the N.C. Department of Transportation with its Best Practices in Environmental Stewardship Award in the category of Organizational Change at a national meeting this week in Minneapolis, Minn. AASHTO specifically cited NCDOT for its efforts to heighten the importance of environmental stewardship through policy, organizational structure, process improvements and partnering.

"I commend NCDOT for its achievement, but I believe that this is a victory for all North Carolinians," Easley said. "The department's new approach to environmental stewardship demonstrates its long-term commitment to building a transportation system that protects and enhances North Carolina's great natural resources. This commitment has and will continue to improve quality of life for all citizens and strengthen our economic competitiveness."

"This award represents a major culture change in the history of the department," said Transportation Secretary Lyndo Tippet. "From top management to employees throughout the department, we are now incorporating environmental stewardship as an integral part of our day-to-day activities."

The 75 award nominations were reviewed by an expert panel of professionals from environmental groups, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, other state transportation departments, the Federal Highway Administration, respected research organizations and AASHTO staff. A review group consisting of state DOTs made the final selection.

In 2001, in response to Easley's charge to improve the environmental and transportation planning process, NCDOT heightened its commitment to environmental stewardship. In addition to Easley's appointment of a Board of Transportation member to represent environmental issues, changes included the department's first Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Planning and Local Government Affairs and the adoption of a new environmental stewardship policy. The department also formalized partnerships with state and federal resource agencies to set common environmental and transportation goals, an effort that has resulted in landmark achievements for the state's wetlands and wildlife.

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